Local Roads & Streets Council
Advisory to the Wisconsin Secretary of Transportation

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Meeting Minutes
Thursday, March 25, 2004
Wisconsin Rapids City Council Chambers
9:00 a.m. to 2:30 p.m.

LRSC Members Present

Wisconsin Counties Association:
Dick Leffler
Emmer Shields

Wisconsin Towns Association:
Marilyn Bhend
Arlyn Helm
Gene Lueck
Marv Samson

**Regional Planning Commissions/
Metro Planning Organizations:**
Don Kush
Walt Raith
Bob Beglinger (for Ken Yunker)

League of Wisconsin Municipalities:
Bill Beil, Jr.
Bill Handlos
Dennis Melvin
Dave Waffle

WisDOT Staff Present
Rod Clark
Mary Forlenza
Steve Coons
Scott Bush
Jerry Mentzel
Ron Nohr
Joe Nestler
Susie Forde
Michael Erickson

Wisconsin Alliance of Cities:
Dave Botts
Rick Jones
Jeff Mantes (for Jeff Polenske)
Paula Vandehey

Others Present:
Tracey Mckenney (FHWA)
Steve Pudloski (UW-TIC)
Randy Riebrandt (UW-TIC)
Mike Hess

LRSC Members Excused:
Ed Brown (WCA)

LRSC Members Absent:

Chet Zurawik (WCA)

Opening Business (Don Kush, Mary Forlenza)
The meeting was called to order shortly after 9 a.m.

Recognition for outgoing WTA member Norm Faber. WisDOT Secretary Busalacchi has signed a plaque for Norm, acknowledging his contributions to the LRSC since 1995.

Suspension of Trans 233 – What Does it Mean? (Ron Nohr – WisDOT) (see attached handout)
As a follow-up to his briefing in November, Ron gave a quick history of the rule. Components of Trans 233 have been in place since 1956. It was revised in 1999 to include all land divisions and to define "improvements in the setback. Certain improvements essential to the viability of a property were no longer routinely allowed, unless a 'waiver of damages' was signed. It was updated again in 2001 in response to concerns raised about the Rule. **On January 28, 2004, the Joint Committee for Review of Administrative Rules (JCRAR) voted to suspend a large portion of the Rule**.

WisDOT was surprised that Trans 233 was suspended, since JCRAR's stated intent was to get Trans 233 to a pre –1999 situation – since they felt that WisDOT had too much statutory authority too early than most other states.

Driven by concerns from developers and the real estate industry, the issue became; "Are setbacks the 'taking' of a property right?" and "Did WisDOT exceed statutory authority in 1999?" JCRAR felt that both of these occurred.

WisDOT in its efforts to address the concerns of JCRAR drafted a report that additional costs and safety impacts without Trans 233 would cost WisDOT an estimated $275 million. JCRAR was unmoved in their push forward to suspend major portions of the rule.

What is allowed after the suspension?
- Review limited to subdivisions that abut a state highway,
- District offices will continue to do the subdivision review,
- Prohibiting improvements (defined as structures),
- Review of surface drainage, and
- Special exceptions.

What is NOT allowed?
- No review of subdivisions that do not abut a state highway,
- No review of other land divisions,
- No discussion about noise or vision corners,
- No "technical land divisions",
- No appeals of district decisions, and
- No $110 fee.

WisDOT will comply with the suspension, and do "informal reviews" if requested. WisDOT will increase its community outreach efforts and inform locals that the department will concentrate on using other access management tools that are still available.

In discussion, it became clear that all counties do not know that they have a right to control access – what is to get the county zoning departments on board. This is a prime public outreach opportunity for WisDOT. Likewise, it was suggested that county zoning organizations should be working with WisDOT on their unique situations. As the department moves to a more focused corridor approach in the future, locals will need to utilize other access management tools, such as: Trans 231, Statute 84.25, Statute 84.295, and Statute 84.09. The department should focus on outreach to provide necessary information to local agencies that can assist.

WISLR Update – (Susie Forde, WisDOT) (see attached handout)
Training. Susie informed the council of the on-going efforts of WISLR staff on its local pilot courses that took place in January & February. The sessions were used to gauge future training needs and confirm if WisDOT's teaching approach is comprehensible to the end user. Participants included LRSC council members.

The curriculum for these pilot courses included: orientation to the On/At method of road locations, viewing both physical and attribute roadway data, using interactive map, and updating data. WisDOT was very pleased with the process. The department received positive feedback and advice for future training courses, and continues to modify training content based on this feedback. A key lesson learned is that WisDOT needs to bring the level of information and training down to the user's level. Maybe offering two types or levels of training, creating a general session (View Only) for casual users, and an advanced course (View and Edit) for users who might be responsible for updating WISLR attribute data and having a more active role in system operations and development.

It is generally agreed that WISLR when fully functional will offer a wide variety of valuable information to decision makers and operational personnel. Managers may want to use this for a multitude of reasons – to look at surrounding communities and their infrastructure, examine similar communities in the state for comparisons, and print reports on current conditions. This ability to print reports and the mapping ability by using GIS Query, are some of the most important features of the system. The WISLR database contains both physical and administrative attribute data querying capabilities from its interactive mapping function. Some of the types of data that are accessible are:

- Pavement type
- Pavement rating
- Shoulder information
- Road category

? Owner
? Functional classification
? Access control – and many other categories.

WisDOT is looking into the feasibility and cost effectiveness of Computer Based Training (CBT) courses, and the software that could accomplish this task. This could save locals time and money, and allow them to study at there own pace. It could also help explain more difficult concepts, and be interactive with other existing training materials and manuals.

Along with these outreach efforts, WisDOT plans more training sessions (late summer/fall of 2004) and will be participating at local government conventions (Wisconsin County Highways Association, Wisconsin Towns Association, and Wisconsin County Clerks Association, etc.).

2003 Pavement Submittal Loading Process The 2003 mileage certification process was successful using WISLR. WisDOT received submissions from 92% (1,781) of the communities. Of these, 700 were in electronic form and 1,081 hard copy. As of the first loading of this data, 57% (1,016) are now successfully loaded into WISLR. This loading process is complicated and WisDOT and locals are both learning as this process is developing. Currently, it is taking at least 2 cycles to get the data into the system. WisDOT hopes to simplify future processes by getting more locals to file electronically, and to resolve other data problems through quicker contact with local officials.

Joe Nestler stated that the numbers of electronic submittals have actually decreased – down about 200 from last cycle. One reason for the decline was that in 2001 with Paserware 2.5, more communities submitted electronically. With the delay in Paserware 3.0 development, 2003 submittals are distributed more between electronic and hard copy. The success rate varies from 0 – 100% for locals' data, due to many factors. For example, problems will always exist when new roads or name changes occur to local networks. As this process evolves, WisDOT is working toward making it more seamless, and expects it may be possible to hit a four-month turn around target time from receipt of the raw data to loading and having it active in WISLR.

2001 Pavement Statistics WisDOT got 99% submittal compliance from local governments in 2001. Of this data, 60% has been loaded. Of the 40% not loaded, there are various reasons for the problems that occurred. WisDOT has learned a great deal from the process, and will work closely with locals to help make this process more efficient and get data that can be loaded during the first loading cycle. The statewide numbers for the 2001 Pavement Rating Summary are:

Pavement Type	Rating	Descrip	% of Rated
Unpaved	1	Failed	5.63%
(25,30,35,40)	2	Poor	14.86%
	3	Fair	38.10%
	4	Good	32.15%
	5	Excellent	9.26%
Based on 18,726 miles of rated roadways			
Paved	1 to 2	Failed - Very Poor	4.62%
(45, 50, 52, 55, 57, 60, 65, 70, 75)	3 to 4	Poor - Fairly Fair	15.75%
	5 to 6	Fair - Very Fair	28.83%
	7 to 8	Good - Very Good	36.77%
	9 to 10	VV Good - Excellent	14.03%
Based on 50,270 miles of rated roadways			

Of the nearly 112,000 miles of streets, roads and highways in Wisconsin, roads under local jurisdiction make up 90% of the mileage. These numbers represent 60% of the local road

network. Of the 68,996 miles of paved roadways, 50,270 are paved road surfaces. Of these pavement ratings, more then half (50.8%) are in the Good – Excellent descriptive class. Of the 18,726 miles of unpaved roads, over 41% are in the Good – Excellent descriptive class. Local governments should be commended for their maintenance efforts given these pavement ratings.

Council comment and requests. The council discussed how many time and resources should go into continuing to work with the "unloadable" information from 2001 (60% is a good sample if it's stratified). If the loaded data is a good representation of roads around the state, perhaps this should be good enough and we should say so. Tight resources should be focused on getting 2003 data uploaded and available, and in completing the tools and encouraging their use. Additionally, when looking at this data, the council requested the WISLR provide the ability for users to break the data down by type of local government (city, village, town, county), so locals can easily use it to make comparisons. Susie and Joe will follow up on these.

Questions arose on how committed WisDOT was to WISLR given the current and likely future state budget cuts. Rod Clark answered that WisDOT has already begun scaling back our services and ability to commit to more projects, and even the many folks who are currently working on WISLR may not be with us in the near future – we don't know what is going to happen. WisDOT will remain committed to WISLR and it will be funded.

The conversation shifted to hardware, and how many local governments still don't have accessible computers? With the requirements for voter registration to occur on-line (federal rules 2004), towns and villages are going to need access to a computer in the near future.

Joe Nestler stated that with the move to electronic submissions and educating users on how to use the system, that WISLR will be a useful system even with the loss of positions. Moving to sole use of On-At will help, and the availability of Paserware 3.0 will only increase WisDOT's efficiency in the future.

Given the percentages of loaded data for 2001, and that WISLR is still in the infancy of its usage, users need to be aware of making blanket assumptions on how valid this data is. The WISLR team is working on getting those predictors and statistics available to make better use of future data and submittals.

When the team does have problems, they have to perform time-consuming follow-ups with the locals. It can as simple as "__" fields, or numeric fields that contain alpha characters. WISLR staff is trying to communicate better with locals, and determining what can be done differently from what's being seen in the 2003 submittals. For example, WisDOT will include a "TIP" sheet on "what not to do" and to encourage electronic filling for the 2005 pavement ratings. Also, the new Paserware 3.0 will help locals with their submittals, making it easier to understand and follow, creating a template for WISLR information, which can then be sent electronically. WisDOT should get better data, more reliable data, and increases in the percentages of loaded data as improvements to the system continue and the locals get more familiar with the process.

WISLR – Pavement Analysis Tool (Joseph Nestler-WisDOT) (see attached handout)
Joe provided a demonstration of the WISLR pavement tools and rudimentary needs analysis. The *main components* for analysis are *capital costs (improvements)*, and *maintenance costs*. The *queries* can be broken down *by pavement type and functional classification*, and *even ranges and/or averages of pavement types and functional classes* can be analyzed. An important built-in feature of the tool is its *ability to specify what year this data is based on*. In the City of Whitewater example (PowerPoint slide 4), 65% of the needs are attributed to current year data, 28% to two-year-old data and 7% are estimated because of no data.

This is an important feature for two reasons: (1) to gauge of how relevant and accurate the information is; (2) it lets WISLR staff know if they need to follow up with a community and work with them to get updated information (internal audit feature). These *queries* can be *viewed in maps (GIS functionality), graphs, and printed reports* depending on user preference. Currently the "Condition Frequency Report" is only for paved roads. Eventually WISLR will have this same feature for unpaved roads and it will be developed using the rating series for unpaved roads.

WisDOT staff is still working on the rudimentary pavement analysis tool of WISLR (testing phase), and Joe hopes to have it available by May 2004 for towns, villages and cities. The counties and statewide information should be available in June 2004. County and statewide data will be compiled by WISLR staff and posted either weekly or monthly on the system (still to be determined).

Don Kush suggested that it would be a great addition to WISLR to provide a link to metadata that explains what the screens (graphs and maps) convey and do not convey. Joe thought this was a great idea – it works nicely with the educational efforts already begun by WISLR staff, could assist locals in understanding what WISLR can and cannot do, and encourages appropriate use of the data contained in WISLR by its users.

Paserware 3.0 (Steve Pudloski – UW-TIC)
Enormous changes have taken place since Steve began working with UW's Transportation Information Center (UW-TIC) in 1993 – at that time there were two software packages, DBrun2 rural, and DBrun2 urban. In 1991, ISTEA mandated that local governments have a pavement management tool, and WisDOT came to the UW-TIC and asked if they could create a pavement management tool that could meet the 5 requirements of ISTEA (projections, histories, cost estimates, etc.) There have been 6 versions of this software in the last ten years.

Paserware 2.5 moved from a MS DOS based program to Window's based software. During that whole time, there was a single database downloaded from WisDOT. It was assumed that this information was correct. It was based on segmentation of only certified road data by the state. It was simplified and it assumed that the segmentation data was the same for both sides of a road and that average widths were consistent throughout the segmented roadway. If someone in Waukesha County questioned how to use Paserware information that they were developing and turn it back to the state to update the files, it was always, a one-way situation for data transfer. With the new environment and development of WISLR, the question becomes; can't we turn this information in, rather then certified plats? So, the constructs of the new 3.0 Paserware are based

on this new concept. UW-TIC's first attempt to begin this process occurred two years ago, by adding ratings and years to the segmentation. This proved difficult, because many segments didn't load. Paserware lacked controls that could allow this new information to match data already in the state database. The environment continues to change rapidly, and UW-TIC is currently about two-thirds through Paserware's 3.0 software development process.

Paserware 3.0 will allow end users to make changes to a local database while monitoring data integrity. UW-TIC programmers tried to make this version look as similar to 2.5 as possible, so that users would be familiar with its operation and are comfortable using it. The road name file that is downloaded from WisDOT is critical to 3.0, you can add to it, but you can't change what is in it, without going through WisDOT. Also, the segmentation that is in 3.0 is different then 2.5. Paserware 3.0 is creating ID numbers for segments. If you send information back to WisDOT it will need the following information: pavement type, rating year, functional classification. If you have changed an ID number, you'll need to include that too.

The goal for the Paserware 3.0 update is to allow two-way information sharing and creation of a more accurate database. The current state database is not simplified any more; there are many different categories that did not exist in former databases. There are tabs that allow for manual changes of these categories at the local level, which get sent to WisDOT for uploading into the main database. It is up to the individual units of government to chose if they want to make updates or rely on the data from WisDOT.

History files will be available for users, like previous versions of the software. You will always be able to up load former versions of Paserware, but is dependent on using the proper ID numbers for your segments. WisDOT has agreed that the ID numbers used in WISLR and our main database will be the same as what you have either generated or been assigned. Printing of reports has also been improved with this update, solving the known problems from past versions.

The last stage in the development of the software is minimizing the problem of uploading data from locals to the state database and over-writing data that we don't want over-written. WISLR is very specific in how data can be uploaded to its database. Software is being developed to create screens for adding roadways or intersections, and controls for duplication of records. Other features will include budget simulations and automatic calculations using your current data. These will be available in both Access and Excel reporting formats.

When will Paserware 3.0 be available? Our intention is to be beta testing by late August / early September with a role out of the program by October/November. This would include training sessions and more feedback on how the program is working. If you have any questions or concerns, please feel free to contact Steve Pudloski at UW-TIC: 800-442-4615.

Committee Updates – (Mary Forlenza – WisDOT)

Mary introduced Michael Erickson to the Council. Michael came from WisDOT Bureau of Planning and is now in the Bureau of Transit and Local Roads. He will be attending all LRSC meetings and will be providing administrative support for the council and its committees.

The Infrastructure Management Committee, led by Paula Vandehey, has updated the location and meeting schedule for its 2004 meetings. Hard copies of the new schedule were passed out and can also be found on WisDOT's website.

LRSC Theme Development for the Biennial Budget – (Don Kush, Mary Forlenza, Executive Committee)

Mary briefed the group on what has happened with the Council since January. Based on conversations with WisDOT Executive Assistant Randy Romanski, the department would like the LRSC take the major themes shared with Randy at the March meeting and create briefing papers that local government officials can use to explain these issues to their constituencies and elected officials, with the intent of building a good understanding and broad grassroots discussion needed on these issues. Working with the Secretary's office and the Office of Public Affairs, outlines and some general background information were shared. The topics include:

- State Highway Maintenance
- Local Transportation Financing
- Role of WISLR/Pavement Rating
- DNR/DOT (Environmental streamlining)
- Education and Outreach

Many of the key messages cross issue areas. The department is excited about working with the LRSC to provide information to legislators and get these issues out in the public arena using the briefing materials the council intends to put together for the next biennial budget process. What we are trying to accomplish is pulling all of the themes together and getting the local transportation story told. An example would be: "Wisconsin is the only state that does not have any state-level maintenance department".

Chair Don Kush reinforced the importance of incorporating these themes, where appropriate, into the individual committees and their future reports, direction and activities.

Committee Reports

Infrastructure Management Committee (Paula Vandehey): I/M is working to educate locals on the importance of pavement ratings and why they need them. We will be explaining best management practices to similar counties on what is working and why, when it comes to pavement rankings and maintenance. How can ratings be used to help create budget recommendations? Would it be possible to match a level of service to a pavement rating system that can be based on a level of funding that can be budgeted? This seems to be the $64,000 question, and will need further study or agreement.

Regulatory, Environment, and Legislative Committee (REAL) (Emmer Shields): REAL continues to work with the DNR on streamlining (regulatory reform) procedures for the environmental review process and increase the effectiveness of oversight of local transportation projects. Major issues still continue with funding issues and how reviews are paid for by locals. FHWA and the state need to figure out the policy concerning federal projects.

Currently WisDOT funds 5 Full Time Equivalent positions, but why not have a specific contact person that works solely with the locals on these projects from beginning to end? We need to speed up the projects approval process; in some form or fashion, agreement must be made on how this can occur, such as standardized plans or processes for permit approvals. Instead of a multiple permit processes with multiple timelines, we need to create one general permit program that allows for one or two DNR persons that sign off on these permits. There is a need for the creation of a committee to work on the issue of DNR staffing. We need to figure out how many projects are actually given to the DNR for permits and how much actual staff time they need to complete the permitting process. WisDOT is not going to pay for this regulatory reform; it will be up to the locals to work with WisDOT and the DNR to solve this problem. The recommendation might be to create a permit fee to fund additional DNR positions, but it is still too early to determine. This will continue to be worked on during the current budget cycle.

Local Transportation Funding Study Group (Rick Jones): The recent conversations on budget topics have provided department direction for the committee (which has been on hiatus for some time). Rick will be pulling together a small group of people in mid-April to stake out a blueprint for the committee's work, and to discuss membership.

Education and Communication Committee (E & C) (Dave Waffle): Currently we are working on updating the LRSC & GTA brochure, and in the process of generating the biennial report due in the fall. Now that we have developed the general themes that we intend to develop, when do we approach the legislature? We need to coordinate the timeframe with the assorted association on priorities and what themes they intend to bring to the legislature on transportation related issues. The council needs to identify these legislative cycles and be ready to move when they occur.

Dave mentioned that we might want to re-title the LRSC Themes paper to 2005, because many of these themes will carry over next year and beyond. One example would be the maintenance issue.

Closing Business
January 22nd Minutes. Approved as written.

The LRSC needs to get the associations on board with many of these themes and to move them forward, especially the League of Wisconsin Municipalities. Transportation issues are not always on the top of their agenda, but the councils' LWM members need to continue to educate them on the importance of transportation related issues and how they are tied to the economic strength of Wisconsin.

Agenda topics for May 27th Council Meeting
- Connections 2030.

- Revisit GTA issues and brochure
- Timelines for development of the themes and legislative budget cycle.

Meeting Was Adjourned at 2:10 pm